

MONOPOLY IN NEWS AGENCY

CONGRESS STARTED JANATA PARTY PUTS IT ON FIRM FOOTING

While the Janta Party is still dragging its feet in the matter of withdrawal of the hated 42nd amendment to the constitution and particularly the draconian measures like MISA and is at present in consultation with the Congress Party as to how far 'certain good things' in the amendment can be retained or that what substitute can be created for the preventive arrest etc. it has certainly revealed its mind as regards giving monopoly in news agency a firm footing which the Indira regime started in the form of Samachar by forcible merger of four news agencies during the Emergency. This act of the ruling Janata Party proves once again the correctness of our Party's political analysis and warning to the people both before and immediately after the Parliamentary poll.

Three weeks before the Kuldip Nayar Committee placed its recommendations on the news agency, the Janata Government came out with a White Paper on the misdeeds of the previous regime during the Emergency to gag the freedom of the press and other media. It recounted among other things the merger of four news agencies into one, Samachar which according to Mr. Nihal Singh of the Statesman was nothing short of 'shot-gun' merger. "After pressure had been applied on as many members of the boards of these agencies as the government could contrive, the financial squeeze was applied by withholding money and threats to cut off teleprinters services, the life line of a news agency" and the "merger resolution of the boards were written by functionaries" later to be claimed by the Information Minister in the Parliament that the merger decisions were taken "voluntarily".

Well such were the misdeeds of the Indira regime which the Janata Party pledged to wipe out to restore democratic rights and liberties including the freedom of the press. Naturally, people were expecting that Janata Party's concrete measures would be in the direction of making an end of these sordid deeds—at least, the status quo ante of the Emergency would be restored. But what is the actual experience?

On April 19, the Janata Government appointed a 12-member committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Kuldip Nayar whose Emergency-thriller 'Judgment' is presently having a good market and who earned a name because of his incurring the displeasure of the previous regime. Such a name and reputation was associated with the committee. The majority of this Nayar Committee including the chairman have, however, very tamely fulfilled the wishes of the present regime. Journalist circles have greeted the report by calling it a "political document", a "command performance and a force". It was openly alleged that the chairman of the committee made several calls on the present Information Minister in connection with preparing the report. (Statesman 3.9.77)

The majority recommendations of the committee are for actual division of the Samachar into three agencies—Sandesh in English, Varta in Hindi and regional languages and the third, News India which would enjoy total monopoly over coverage of international news. So, each of the agencies will enjoy monopoly position in its respective field.

The salient points of the recommendations are therefore that (1) the agencies to be formed by the division of Samachar will be done under a charter laid down by the
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POLICE FIRING IN BOKARO—

Comrade Anil Sarkar on behalf of UTUC (Lenin Sarani) Bihar State Committee DEMANDS JUDICIAL ENQUIRY

"While congratulating the workers and employees of Bokaro Steel Ltd. and Hindustan Steel Construction Ltd. for making the call given by the Central Co-ordination Committee of the Workers' Council for "Bokaro Bandh" on 29th August a complete success, we strongly protest against the brutal, unprovoked firing of the police on the peaceful workers of BSL and HSCL killing four workers on the spot and making wounded several hundred people. We also protest against the widespread arrest of leaders and workers and

imposition of 144 Cr. P. C. in the Steel City and creating terror by putting the whole Steel City under C. R. P. control.

"We are sorry to note that the Janata Government's claim for restoring the right of democratic trade union movement has been blackened by the action of police firing on peaceful steel workers by the local administration.

"Under the circumstances we urge upon the Government to take immediate action for mitigating the grievances of the workmen and demand:

1) Immediate setting up of Judicial enquiry into the incident of unprovoked firing on the steel workers;

2) Immediate suspension of the Police Officer responsible for the said firing;

3) Adequate compensation for those who were killed;

4) Employment of a relative (preferably wife) in the service;

5) Immediate and unconditional release of persons arrested in this connection;

6) Immediate settlement of Bonus and burning grievances of the workers".

Assam State Committee of the SUCI's Call for Left and Democratic Front

Assam State Committee of our party, SUCI, was in session on 24th and 25th of August last to review the present political situation in the state. The State Committee expressed its grave concern at the catastrophic situation arising out of the devastating flood in the state. The Committee took serious note of the failure on the part of the Administration to maintain and protect embankments on the rivers, breaches of which in many parts of the state made the flood situation terrible putting the people to untold sufferings. The Committee demanded of the govern-

ment to extend all-out relief measures to the distressed people at once.

On the pressing issues affecting the masses at present, the State Committee demands that: (i) steep price-rise of the essential commodities is to be checked and brought down within the purchasing capacity of the people; (ii) adoption of concrete, clear cut programme for speedy industrial growth in the state so as to mitigate ever increasing unemployment and last but not the least (iii) opening up and improvement of communication system in the backward areas. The Committee at the

same time could not but note the growing urge for movement among the different sections of the toiling people. They are actually coming out in struggle, since the Emergency was withdrawn. This urge of the people is to be given concrete shape and people's movements are to be coordinated and strengthened under a correct leadership.

Realising the twin needs of the hour, the State Committee has resolved that the only answer to meet the situation, obtaining in the state, was to form a Left and Democratic United Front of all
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WITHIN THE WEST BENGAL ASSEMBLY

Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar on the Budget

The 'Left Front' Government installed in West Bengal, though a political development within the state, has its bearing on all India politics. The CPI(M) which heads the ministry has claimed that this combination of 'left and democratic forces' is the only viable alternative to Congress that can serve the cause of the oppressed people. How far this claim is justified or whether this government really serves as an alternative to Congress in terms of basic approach and outlook translated into concrete measures and style of functioning towards encouragement of people's legitimate democratic movement is to be tested on its actual performance. From this angle, we are giving here its budget proposals particularly on important heads of accounts reflecting its basic approach and attitude towards the bourgeoisie, the bureaucratic administrative set up, police, labour and mass movement and on question of ensuring non-application of MISA on political ground in the state, from the speeches and proposals made by our party's representatives in the state assembly which were totally blacked out by the bourgeois press.

—Editorial Board,
Proletarian Era.]

Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar's speech on 27th August '77

I have gone very carefully through the budget speech placed before the house by the honourable finance minister on 25th last. I find that towards the end of the speech he has mentioned that an attempt has been made to bring about a 'silent economic revolution'. He has also said that 'through this budget, the oppressed and humiliated people of this state will find a new expression of their life, and will be

able to hold high their lowered heads'. So far as my opinion goes, I really have no idea how, in this third stage of world-wide crisis of moribund capitalism and imperialism, it is possible to bring about a revolution simply through formulations in a budget, without taking up any programme of social and political revolution. I am a student of Marxism-Leninism. But it is beyond my knowledge whether the teachings of Marxism-Leninism have anywhere ever as much as dropped a hint that such a miracle is actually possible. I have to refer to Marxism-Leninism since the honourable finance minister has quoted Lenin at the beginning of his speech and said—economics is distilled politics. To any student of Marxism-Leninism it cannot be unknown that without a fundamental change of the state structure, it is impossible to resolve economic crisis. And yet, the honourable finance minister has spoken of 'silent revolution', completely ignoring this fundamental teaching. A strange contradiction indeed! Moreover, the manner in which the real solution to our country's problems has been concealed throughout the budget speech while encouraging the masses to cherish absolutely preposterous hopes, will only help to confuse and mislead the people—willingly or unwillingly—very much in the manner the Congress had done. And the whole idea must obviously be to keep away from the masses the real way to emancipation. The mention of problems in the speech has been completely vague. And the 'extremely easy solution' he has provided to the problems is equally startling since it appears to consist in increasing investment on government initiative and appealing to industrialists to increase investment on their part too. I must expressly state regarding

this point that in a capitalist economy like ours, investment of capital—be it in the public or private sector does not depend on the government's fancy or its appeals to industrialists. Rather, it is entirely dependent on the law of capitalist motive force of production. What is the motive force of production in our country's economy? It is certainly earning maximum profit. And this question of earning maximum profit is inextricably linked up with the capitalist market where commodity is sold. In other words, capitalists will invest only if they are convinced that they have a good market, that their investment will fetch them maximum profits. Then is it not true that when, in a capitalist country like India, people's purchasing capacity has fallen to a miserable low on account of grinding capitalist exploitation, and the internal market has thus severely contracted, and when in this third stage of general crisis of world capitalism the international market too is extremely constricted, there is very little room for investment both at home and abroad? Hence, this basic problem of capitalist crisis should have been mentioned in the budget speech and the people should have been pointed out the real way to emancipation from this crisis. The people of this state wanted that this budget presented by the 'left front' government, would at least reflect an earnestness to provide the masses with some relief, as far as practicable within the present economic and political framework, and would accordingly spell out some definite measures towards that end. Hence, it was naturally expected that the present government would make a serious drive against hoarding and black-marketing and try to hold down the level of soaring prices and relieve the masses to an

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Comrade Renupada Haldar on Labour Budget

Taking part in the debate on budget for labour and employment on 17th September, Comrade Renupada Haldar said that in the last thirty years while the capitalists shifted the burden of crisis of the economy on to the shoulder of the working people, the Congress extended its hands of cooperation by using the governmental machinery to brutally suppress peoples' movement whenever it grew and developed against capitalist tyranny. The 'left front' has come to governmental power through election. They also made many promises to the people before the election. But no perceptible change could be found in the budget speech and proposal of the labour minister. Rather, the way in which he has laid so much stress on legalism and conciliatory machinery as opposed to worker's militant united movement for settlement of their legitimate demands will definitely raise certain very important questions.

Firstly, in the existing system is it at all possible to settle the legitimate demands of the workers without organised movement? For example, despite government's directive to the management of the Hindustan Steel Co., Dum Dum is still keeping 300 workmen out of employment. There are many more instances where the managements are defying government's order or decisions of the conciliations machinery. Now, what the workers will do? Will they wait for the dawning of good senses on the managements? Besides, even the results of bipartite talks and agreements also depend by and large, on the strength and capability of the united movements of the workers. So, viewed from worker's interest, there is no denying that how far worker's struggles and movements can be developed and strengthened should be the matter of supreme importance. In

order to help developing and strengthening worker's legitimate democratic movement what is therefore necessary is not only to safeguard those movements from the interference of police but to stand by those movements with active support. From this angle, the proposal of SUCI was accepted by the UF Government in 1967 and declared the policy of 'non-interference of police in legitimate democratic movement' which was boldly put to practice by the labour ministry. It is really deplorable therefore, that the present 'left front' government has not yet come out with this declaration so as to defend, actively support workers legitimate democratic movement. As a natural consequence, police, as in the past, is still interfering in the legitimate movements of the workers to suppress them, to subject them to tyranny and oppression. Concrete cases can be cited. In Manicktolla, police have arrested 22 workers who were on struggle against the management. In Behala, the local O. C. was in direct collusion with the management of Bharat Laminating Corporation to suppress the workers' movement there. Workers were arrested, they were victims of police oppression and attacks. Where is the guarantee of the workers against this police torture and interference? I must say the labour minister's speech is conspicuous by the absence of a clear-cut policy objective on this vital question.

I would like to draw the attention of the house to another important issue. At the meeting of the state Labour Advisory Board in Rotanda, Writers' Buildings on 11th August on industrial relations, a proposal was made for the reinstatement of all the victimised employees. But the government has issued a circular which is surprising.

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THE CALL OF 5th AUGUST



5th of August came this year as it will come year after year with the deepest of sorrow and anguish as also with a ringing call. On this day, the world proletariat lost one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, the great leader of the proletariat, the founder General Secretary of the revolutionary Party of the proletariat in our soil—the SUCI. At this complex stage of revolutionary battles of the proletariat not only in our country but the world over, the sudden and premature loss of the great revolutionary genius, **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh** creates a great void which can not but be felt with deep anguish and pain. But this is not the day to express our sorrow and anguish only. This will be against His teachings. It is also a day of His ringing call to revolutionary battles which he has left behind along with the great armoury of His revolutionary thought and teachings. Those of us who carry His banner, the banner of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, can on no pretext, slacken our revolutionary zeal, be unmindful to the Great revolutionary task entrusted on us by Him. 5th of August reminds us anew, this great task.

The Central Committee of our Party gave a call to every party unit and the toiling people of our country to observe 5th August with all solemnity and in a befitting manner with a view to imbibe the great revolutionary teachings of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, to grasp the great revolutionary lessons from the concrete examples of His great revolutionary life and struggles.

The Central Committee released a memorial programme for observance from 5th to 31st August. As a part of this programme, numerous memorial meetings were organised throughout the length and breadth of the country. We are covering just a few of these meetings, the reports of which have already reached. All the meetings were flooded to overflowing by Party Comrades, supporters, sympathisers, cross-sections of the toiling people, workers, peasants, teachers, students and youths both men and women.

In all these meetings, wreaths were placed to the portrait of the great leader of the proletariat on behalf of the Party and mass fronts—UTUC (Lenin Sarani), KKMf, DSO, DYO, MSS and numerous social organisations, distinguished personalities, friends and admirers of the Party. Comrades, stood in Red Salute to take their revolutionary vow by repeating the pledge of the Central Committee read out to them, the pledge, the party took after His sudden and shocking demise. With the song on the great departed leader, meetings started and ended with the Internationale. Comrades heard with rapt attention and all solemnity the revolutionary lessons exemplified in His great revolutionary life and struggles, recounted by the Party leaders as speakers. In all the meetings, a portion of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's** speech in record disc was played to the great emotional surge of those present.

We give below, in brief, the reportings.

BIHAR

Dhanbad : The memorial meeting at Dhanbad was held on 14th August last. Hundreds of workers from Bokaro Steel Plant, Sindhri Fertiliser Plant, Bhaga Rail Colony and Coal mines of

Jharia, Digwadih, Chandanquari and students, youths intellectuals and housewives in large number came in processions to join the meeting and pay heartfelt homage to their great departed leader. In his two hour long speech in Hindi Comrade Asutosh Banerjee, member of the West Bengal State Secretariat and Secretary of the Calcutta District Committee of the Party and the main speaker of the meeting narrated the unique struggle—unique in its vastness, intensity and scientific process—that **Comrade Ghosh** conducted all through his life and recalled the historic teachings he had bequeathed to the toiling masses all over the world. He said, as a successful inheritor of the great teachers of the proletariat as also all the great men of our country in the past, a giant thinker as He was in the present day international Communist movement **Comrade Ghosh** made a unique blending of the two to concretise Marxism-Leninism and apply it to the concrete condition in Indian soil. **Comrade Hem Chakraborty**, Dhanbad District Secretary of our Party also spoke as the president of the meeting.

Mazaffarpur : A memorial meeting was held here at the Town Hall on the 16th August. The hall was jam-packed and could hardly accommodate the stream of people coming from far off places. What was remarkable, just few days before the meeting, twenty leading party leaders and organisers including Majaffarpur Dist. Secretary and some district committee members were sentenced to life imprisonment but other organisers undaunted at this severe and sinister blow of this government did not fail to rise to the occasion to make the memorial meeting of their beloved departed leader and guide a big success. Here also Comrade

Asutosh Banerjee was the main speaker and Comrade N. R. Singh and Comrade Amar Kumar Pandey—both members of the Bihar State Committee were also present, Comrade Pandey presided over the meeting.

Munghyer : The memorial meeting at Munghyer was held on the 20th August last at the Town Hall. In this meeting Comrade Amriteswar Chakraborty, member of the Bihar State Committee took the chair and Comrade Sankar Sing, member of the Central Committee and the Secretary of Bihar State Committee was present as the main speaker. In his speech Comrade Sing recalling the great revolutionary teachings of **Comrade Ghosh** said—His was a life and character that was built up through tortuous struggles since the very beginning of His historic mission to establish a real working class party in our soil with a handful of compatriots. It was a gigantic struggle initiated by our great leader which is now bearing fruits through the expansion and consolidation of our Party SUCI throughout the country. His great revolutionary genius placed before the toiling mass as of our country the correct base political line of the Indian proletariat—the anti-Capitalist Socialist Revolution in our country and for this desired goal to be brought to reality he gave the clarion call to build up the political power of the people through the formation of peoples' committees as invincible instruments of mass struggle.

Comrade Singh expressed his confidence that being equipped with the model leadership emerged out of the band of professional revolutionaries created by Him, with thousands of dedicated cadres taught and trained by Him throughout the country and above all being armed with the scientific process of struggle introduced by Him in the party, the party carrying His revolutionary banner will definitely stand the test of complex revolutionary struggles to

lead the toiling masses through to the end of establishing working class state in our country.

ASSAM

Gauhati : The memorial meeting was held in Gauhati town, on 22nd August last at the Nabin Bardaloi Hall. Incessant rains and devastating flood in many parts of the state stood in the way of organising memorial meetings in many other places. Comrade Sukomal Dasgupta West Bengal State Secretary of the Party was present as the main speaker in the meeting. In his speech Comrade Dasgupta highlighted the great revolutionary character of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh** who emerged as a product of struggle—not an ordinary struggle but an uncompromising, fierce and bitter struggle covering all aspects of life conducted all through his life, till his last breath. Comrade Dasgupta urged upon all to devote themselves more and more to revolutionary struggle, to grasp revolution following his great teachings and exemplary struggle and thereby identify themselves more and more with the Party and revolution. He observed that this would be the only way to fulfil his behest. **Comrade Asit Bhattacharya**, Secretary of Assam State Committee also addressed.

Meghalaya : The memorial meeting in Meghalaya was held at Sillong in the Assam Club Hall on the 23rd August. In this meeting also **Comrade Sukomal Dasgupta** was the main speaker and Comrade Asit Bhattacharya, Comrade Udayan Ghosh, Comrade Samar Dutta were present and paid tributes in memory of the great departed leader.

Madhya Pradesh

A memorial meeting was held at Jabbalpur on the 16th August last. What was of great significance was the attendance of a large number of common people along with party men and numbers of mass organisations. **Comrade Asoke Ganguly** presided over the meeting.

Congress Started, Janata Party Puts it on Firm Footing

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Parliament and Parliament should review the work of the news agencies after ten years, (2) the government would immediately set up an interim body to look after the transition period from the present set-up, (3) this interim body should "select" chief editor, (4) the government should provide financial resources to the agencies whose combined annual deficit would run to Rs. 1.70 crores and should also (5) oversee the "proper utilisations" of the fund. (6) External Affairs Ministry should confine its transmission to official news and information only, and should subscribe to News India for a special Indian news round up for the Indian missions abroad.

In a note of dissent, Mr. C. R. Irani of the Statesman and Mr. A. K. Sarkar of the Patrika Group have pointed out that the acceptance of the report would cause further deterioration in the functioning of news services in the country. There would be no competition in the service 'worth the name'.

Journalist circles are pointing out that for some-time past particularly during the Emergency, the government's Press Information Bureau (PIB) was distributing ninety per cent of domestic news and that trend would be further accelerated by the proposed set-up. Secondly, the government's grip over the news agency would be further tightened because of perpetual financial dependence of the agency. They point out that administrative and financial control will invariably bring government's control as these were the instruments through which Samachar was contrived and run. The Committee also could not deny this possibility. A journalist therefore rightly comments that "In sum, if Samachar was the illegitimate child of the Emergency, the proposed setup will be a consumptive child ambling

on the financial clutches supplied by the government"—(Kuldip Nayar Report A Matrix of confusion—A.N. Probhu—Economic Times 4.9.77.)

The reasons behind all these are to be found in the very fact of political reality. Capitalism is crisis-ridden today and is very much apprehensive of real extension of democratic rights and liberties including the freedom of press and democratic mass movements for which free scope for mobilisation of democratic opinion is essential. The bourgeoisie is trying to confine people's rights and liberties within the very narrow frame-work as is just providing a facade of parliamentary democracy behind which fascism is being firmly consolidated. With this end in view the Janata Party now in power, chosen by the bourgeoisie as its alternative, is moving in the direction of giving just a cover, a so-called sanctity of those very measures of the previous regimes against which they were calling the people to rise before the poll. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our great departed leader, cautioned the working people, long ago, that they must realise the real difference between anti-Congressism of different Parliamentary parties and real anti-capitalist outlook and political stand of the revolutionary party in order to remove the root cause of social injustice and class oppressions. The parties which are capitalising people's anti-Congress feelings and sentiments by pointing out its various anti-democratic and fascist devices but not fighting capitalism at the same time are doing so only to grab governmental power to do the same for defending the aggregate class interest of the ruling bourgeoisie and crisis-ridden capitalism. When these parties will come to governmental power, they will defend in the same manner the anti-democratic acts and

measures of the previous regime, notwithstanding their vituperations to the contrary. Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat having set the goal of anti-capitalist socialist revolution before the oppressed masses, is genuinely interested in fighting for restoration, preservation and further extension of democratic rights and liberties, of the people in order to make those conducive to the big fight for overthrow of the capitalist order. That is why only our party, the party of the Indian proletariat gave a timely warning and caution to the people about this class design of the bourgeoisie. When there was so much talk about a great political change having taken place in our country, giving a note of caution to the people, the Central Committee of our Party, pointed out in its resolution of 6th April '77 while reviewing the political situation after the parliamentary poll, that "although Congress has been dislodged from the power at the centre in the last election, not only capitalism continues to exist which has already given birth to monopoly and finance capital in our country but it exists with economic and political centralisation and cultural regimentation which form the rock-bottom foundation of fascism".

Anybody having an unbiased mind and a real democratic sense cannot but note with dismay, the measure of change that has come over newspaper reportings and coverage of news in the bourgeois dailies. Although pre-censorship is said to have gone, but what is going on instead, is more dangerous a form,—a kind of 'self-censorship' which means giving coverage and publicity only to those parties and personalities whose help and cooperation, the bourgeoisie has been assured of for the perpetuation of the system. These dailies are not even giving

BIHAR COAL MINERS' UNION CONDEMNS POLICE FIRING

Close on the heels of the ghastly murder of two Naxalite political prisoners behind the bar in Bihar barely a month ago, two more instances of wanton police firings in Bihar, one at Jitpur Colliery in Dhanbad district and the other at Bokaro Steel City in quick successions have splashed the press headline.

For quite some time past, the workers of the Jitpur colliery in Dhanbad district have been agitating for realisation of their long-standing

legitimate and modest demands under the leadership of Bihar Coal Miners' Union, affiliated to UTUC (Lenin Sarani). The management of the colliery in league with the police administration and local rogues was very much active to destroy the movement from gaining momentum. After all their heinous attempts failed, the police came forward in the forefront to rescue the management. On 24th of August last, the situation reached its climax when a contingent of Bihar Home Guard unleashed its brutal force on the peacefully struggling workers and wantonly opened fire resulting in the death of Sri Arjun Tewari on the spot and injury to several workers.

Comrade Anil Sarkar, in a press statement, on behalf of Bihar Coal Miners' Union severely condemned the brutal and unprovoked police firings and demanded of the government to stop frequent police interferences against the peacefully struggling coal-miners. He also demanded of the government to stop forthwith police high-handedness and vandalism to the serious threat of legitimate democratic mass struggles. Comrade Sarkar demanded, *inter alia*, of the appropriate authority:

1) Immediate public enquiry into the wanton police firings killing Sri Tewari and wounding several others:

2) Immediate withdrawal of Bihar Home Guard and Security force.

3) Adequate compensation to the families of the deceased and wounded workers:

4) Unconditional release of all the workers taken to custody and above all, unequivocal declaration from the government that Police shall not interfere in the legitimate democratic mass movements so as to stop any further recurrence of such dastardly killings of the toiling people.

truthful coverage of the proceedings of the legislative forums, for the right of which, they were raising their mock cry, the other day. Our MLAs in the West Bengal Assembly are systematically being blacked out as a general policy and whenever there is an exception it is more to create confusion than to report the substance of their observations. Even mammoth mass meetings organised by our Party to spread revolutionary thoughts of our great departed leader is finding no place of mention in bourgeois dailies. Such is the role now being played by the bourgeois national dailies. Gone are the days of bourgeois liberalism and observance of minimum journalistic code and ethics. The real aim and object is to arrest the idea of class struggle, revolution and the workings of the revolutionary party from being circulated or publicised among the toiling masses. Instead, myths and images about parties and personalities who are anti-revolutionary are being sedulously built up even about those who were political nonentities yesterday. This is the whole truth about the bourgeois class-design and conspiracy that is now at work through mass media. Janata Party's present move and the silent approval to this move by other parties 'friendly' to it are to be politically judged from this base class outlook and angularity.

ON THE RECENT DECISION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW CERTAIN TEXT BOOKS ON HISTORY —COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH'S TEACHINGS RECALLED

The Central Government has withdrawn from circulation certain history books, published by the National Council for Educational Research Training, Indian Council for Historical Research and prescribed as text books in schools, on basis of a note prepared by Sri Nanaji Deshmukh of the erstwhile Jana Sangh and at present a General Secretary of the Janata Party. The history books on which the axe of the authority is grinding are "A Text-book of History" for secondary schools by Bipan Chandra, "Freedom struggle" prepared by Bipan Chandra, Amallesh Tripathi and Barun De, "Medieval India" a text book of history for middle schools by Romila Thapar and "Communalism and writing of Indian History" by Romila Thapar, Harbans Mukhia and Bipan Chandra. It is seen from the contents of the note that Sri Deshmukh has charged the authors of these books from religious revivalist angle, and it is most condemnable that Government of India took action against these books on the basis of this note.

of In this connection it must be mentioned that we are not holding any brief for these authors as we have differences with them on many points. It is our considered opinion that without having a comprehensive knowledge about dialectical materialism, which in its turn, is not possible without direct participation in the revolutionary struggle of the masses, no proper assessment of the history of the Indian nationalist movement is possible. It is our party, the SUCI, alone which under the leadership of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, the great leader of the proletariat, that made a thorough scientific analysis of the Indian nationalist movement and showed how the nationalist movement in our country became religion oriented.

Sri Deshmukh has charged in the note that these books presented a completely different view of the history of the country far removed from our traditional cultural and 'scientific' values and the authors criticised the early nationalist leaders who tried to awaken patriotic feelings among the people by drawing their attention to revivalist thoughts. According to these authors "though the militant nationalism was a great source of inspiration to the Indian independence struggle yet some of their activities

paved the way of communalism. They wanted to identify India with the Hindus and Indian culture with the Hindu nationalism".

So it is clear from the comments of the author of the note that any critical comment on communal orientation of Indian nationalist movement is anathema to him,

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that under capitalism people are subjected to not only economic exploitation but they suffer cultural regimentation as well. The ruling bourgeoisie know that the interest of the ruling bourgeois class will be best served if the people are culturally regimented in favour of the existing exploiting capitalist system. With this heinous aim in view the bourgeoisie pattern the education system in such a way so that instead of helping the growth of correct scientific world outlook among the students, it fosters old and out-dated obscurantist ideas and revivalist thoughts.

The action of the Central Government in gagging the voice of the authors because of their contrary views is most undemocratic and this action must be condemned by all democratic minded people.

In this connection it must be stated that it is

only **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, the beloved departed leader, teacher and guide of our party and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, who for the first time, brilliantly analysed and showed that Indian nationalist movement failed to incorporate the task of social and cultural revolution in the independence struggle. He also showed the root cause of this weakness in nationalist movement. Dealing on this question **Comrade Ghosh** said, "...it should be noted that in India the process of formation of nation started in the second half of the nineteenth century, when capitalism as a world social force, had not only lost its erstwhile revolutionary character but also became definitely anti-revolutionary. Over and above this general characteristic, Indian capitalism had its specific feature. Unlike Western Capitalism, which grew independently, Indian capitalism grew and developed under the domination of foreign finance capital with feudal relations surrounding it. As a result, it had a stunted growth. The nationalist section of the Indian bourgeoisie was naturally stirred into movement against imperialism. Because, the imperialist rule in our country stood as an insurmountable obstacle in the path of establishing its class rule here and freely exploiting the Indian masses. But it, like all colonial bourgeoisie in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, was mortally afraid of revolutionary mass struggle against imperialism. For, it apprehended that revolutionary struggle by the Indian people for national liberation, if successful, would not only end the imperialist rule in our country but also, along with it, remove the national bourgeoisie from the leadership of the

struggle, open up the path of non-capitalist way of development and completely shatter all possibilities of establishing capitalist rule in India. Antagonism with imperialism on the one hand and mortal fear of revolutionary struggle by the people against imperialism on the other hand made the nationalist section of the Indian bourgeoisie maintain a reformist-oppositional role against imperialism. Its role against feudalism was equally compromising. Indian capitalism, therefore, tried to develop through compromises with both imperialism and feudalism. The result of compromises with feudalism was that the Indian bourgeoisie could not and did not carry out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions essential for the democratisation of the society and complete merger of different nationalities speaking different languages and different communities professing different religions into a nation." (On Communal Problem by **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**).

After analysing the root cause of this inability of the Indian national bourgeoisie to incorporate the tasks of social and cultural revolution in the Indian independence struggle **Comrade Ghosh** pointed out the religion orientation that crept into the Indian nationalist movement. He said "...The Indian nationalist leadership not only did not try to free the Indian masses from the bondage of religion and democratise the society by carrying out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions. It, on the contrary, took up religion as a vehicle of propagating nationalistic ideas. Indian nationalism, therefore, was basically religion oriented. This religion-oriented nationalism expressed itself in the form of Hindu religious revivalism. The psychological reaction, which the

Hindu revivalist Indian nationalism produced in the non-Hindu masses, was by and large, responsible for keeping them especially the Muslim masses away from the national liberation movement in our country". (On Communal Problem—by **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**).

This was what happened during the nationalist movement and as **Comrade Ghosh** has pointed out, "Even after coming to power the nationalist leadership did not rectify the wrong approach of theirs in this respect, which it adopted before capturing power. The present rulers of our country, in place of carrying out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions, are only aiding more enthusiastically, in the name of secularism, the anti-secular forces and tendencies, by encouraging all sorts of religious customs, conventions and prejudices, which have increased several times compared to the pre-independence days. It is no wonder that in the circumstances the slogan of Hindi-Hindu-Hindusthani is finding a strong footing now. It should be realised that true secularism does not mean encouraging the individual to profess, practise and propagate his religious faith. Nor does it presuppose state patronage to every religious faith so as to expand the influence of religion over the masses of the people. Far less does it aim at giving some premium to a given community professing a particular faith, by offering it special privileges on religious consideration alone. A really secular state considers religion as the private affair of its citizen and does not, therefore interfere, either by encouragement or by opposition in the profession, practice and propagation of religion by the individual. It, on the contrary, guarantees full freedom to the believers to profess any faith as well as to the non-believers. By carrying out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions, it democratises the society and

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INSIDE THE WEST BENGAL ASSEMBLY

Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar's Speech On the Budget

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extent, from the oppressive load of taxes. But the budget presented, has completely belied all such expectations. The finance minister has imposed a fresh load of taxes amounting to forty two crores, to be shouldered almost entirely by the ordinary people. An essential commodity like tea also has not been spared this extra burden of fresh taxes. Even in the two cases where Sales Tax has been reduced (from 8% to 6% on medicine and from 15% to 12% on motor accessories), the benefit will almost certainly be reaped by the industrialists and traders instead of it being passed on to the ordinary people since the budget declares no positive steps to prevent such misappropriation which is very much likely. Instead, the finance minister has remained content only with an appeal to traders concerned, to pass on the benefit 'in full' to the people. This apart, budget allocations on public health, medicine, relief and education too, are far from adequate. Not only that, allocations on certain developmental schemes have actually been reduced. From all this, I am constrained to say that this budget presented by the 'left front' government has been schemed from a completely non-left approach, and makes no departure from the budgets placed by the previous Congress governments.

Speech made during the issue-wise deliberations on administrative expenditure and allocations

The honourable chief minister has placed before the house some demands regarding allocations and expenditure on administration. I will therefore confine my speech to the approach that I feel should be reflected by a left government in conducting administration. The

Congress government in the past, always conducted the government and administration from a completely bureaucratic approach like all other bourgeois governments the world over and bothered little about public opinion. Naturally, that government always leant heavily upon the bureaucrats, and from this very approach, squandered crores of rupees on them, depriving a famishing nation even of the bare necessities of existence. And we all know that for the last thirty years, members in the opposition have quite rightfully cried hoarse over the manner in which the Congress government wasted a fabulous sum of money on a top-heavy administration. I hope you will all admit that a left government's attitude regarding this matter must naturally be quite different. A left government can certainly be expected to keep administration completely free from the tentacles of bureaucracy and instead of depending on it, will rely on organised people's movement and initiative in running the administration. This, I feel, is the only proper method of conducting the government and administration with a democratic approach, instead of the bureaucratic attitude experienced in the past. And once the administration is run with this approach, the necessity to maintain a top-heavy administration would naturally cease to exist. On the other hand, the large sum of money that would be thus saved, may easily be spent on developmental schemes and various kinds of relief to the people. Naturally what was expected of the 'left front' government? It was certainly expected to reflect this attitude while making allocations on administration. But from the budgetary provisions of the present government I cannot but conclude that the very same policy of

the Congress government of squandering crores of rupees on a top-heavy administration still holds good despite the installation of a new government with a left nomenclature. *The amount of money the honourable chief minister has demanded for the three wings of administration—general services, district administration and council of ministers—stands at rupees 7 crores and 89 lakhs, whereas last year, during Congress rule, the amount sanctioned for this same purpose, was rupees 6 crores 69 lakhs and 44 thousand. In other words, within a span of just about a year, expenses on administration has been raised by rupees 1 crore 11 lakhs and 56 thousand.* This certainly reflects no left approach in running the government and administration.

Secondly, I would like to draw your attention to another important question. I feel that along with the necessity of building up a clean and democratic administration, it is also necessary, in order to keep the administration under control, to maintain strict administrative neutrality. Those who are acquainted with scientific socialism, history and social science, must know that *this administration is a permanent organ of the state which is the class instrument of coercion.* Its power, therefore, is menacingly overwhelming. Hence, if the government really means to keep such an administration under strict control, it has got to be extremely alert and vigilant. Thirty years have passed since we achieved independence. Yet, the bureaucracy of our country has still kept up the same colonial tradition in its dealings with the masses. And being divested of neutrality even in a relative sense, it even dares to rig general elections today, which is quite

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Resolution on MISA— SUCI's Amendment not accepted by 'Left Front' Government

On 6th September last, an unofficial resolution was moved by a CPI(M) member in the assembly with an appeal to the central government to scrap MISA. In reaction, when the Congress members opposed the resolution on technical grounds, Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar of the SUCI, strongly defended the main resolution and proposed an amendment. In this amendment he demanded that there must be a categorical declaration that so long the MISA is not being scrapped by the Central Government, the West Bengal Government would not apply the black act on political grounds. He also pointed out that according to the declared policy of the state government, there can be no tangible reason for the 'left front' government not to accept it. But strangely enough, the 'left front' government directly opposed the amendment and when Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar pressed for division rejected the amendment by an overwhelming majority. It is best known to the 'left front' government why they could not accept the amendment. If they contend that the purpose of the amendment was adequately served by the main resolution itself, then why did they go all out to oppose the amendment? Further, was there any necessity to make a subject of this nature an issue to be put to vote only to create division? We, for the information of the people, reproduce here the speech made by Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar in defence of the main resolution, along with the amendment he sought:

I extend my unstinted support to the resolution Sri Sunil Basu Roy has moved to scrap MISA. The history of the last thirty

years of Congress rule is a glaring example of how a capitalist country while keeping up the semblance of parliamentary democracy tramples upon democracy itself and marches towards fascism. Introduction of MISA and other such black acts is very much characteristic of fascist rule. Congress members are now talking of democracy. But I would like to ask them what sort of rule they have introduced in the course of thirty years since independence? Far from scrapping the various black acts like the Arms Act, the British had introduced in this country, they have not only preserved them, but have further introduced a number of worse anti-people acts all these years. They argue that MISA is a necessary act for the internal security of the country. I say, the act MISA has been a bit wrongly named. It should be corrected as 'Maintenance of internal security for free exploitation by the capitalists'. This would be the appropriate name. Many often complain that the MISA has been unfairly applied. But prior to that, I would like to ask whether any such act, giving the government blanket approval to detain people without trial, can exist at all in a free, democratic state? Whereas the very structure of bourgeois democracy was once built up on the principles of rule of law, the right to seek justice and so on, how can there be an act that prevents an individual from seeking justice at all and makes him suffer detention without trial for days on? This is a veritable jungle-law. Congress members are now arguing that if the MISA is scrapped, it

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Inside The West Bengal Assembly

'Left Front' Government's Expenditure on Police Exceeds the Amount of Last Year's Congress Budget

The house has been asked to give sanction to a head of accounts (police) with which is associated a sordid history of brutal suppression of many a legitimate, democratic struggle of the workers, peasants and other toiling sections of the people. While rising to speak on the police budget, can we forget the martyrs of the food movement of '59, who laid down their precious lives? Who can forget the martyrdom of Ananda Hait and Nurul Islam, the dastardly killings of innumerable political prisoners behind the bars or the poignant history of numberless martyrs who had to give their life and blood?

Before going into the budget as such, I would like to say at the very outset that it is a fact that the Congress, being completely isolated from the masses, had no other recourse than to lean heavily on the police just to stay on to power. So it wasted crores rupees of public money in order to create an atmosphere of tension to terrorise the people into submission. As a result, with the ever-mounting police budgets, to the serious detriment of developmental expenditures in a poor country like ours, people had for them the common experience of police oppression and tyranny in their daily life. So we see, there has been a fourteen-fold increase in police budget during the last twenty nine years. In 1948-49 the expenditure on this head was Rs. 4 crores and 17 lakhs, which now stands at Rs. 58 crores and 25 lakhs. In a country like ours, where 70% of the people are below poverty line, such a colossal expenditure on police is simply unthinkable. This might have been necessary for the Congress which had no mass backing. But is it necessary for the 'left front' government too,

which says that it does not depend on the police to be in power, or that it will not send police to break people's movement? If the government is true to its declarations, then the natural thing that should follow is curtailment of expenditure on police and channelising the fund thus saved, to various welfare measures like education, public health, etc. Instead, we find the present 'left front' government has sanctioned to the head of police accounts, a much bigger amount than was sanctioned ever by the Congress Government, which had to spend a large sum of money on police administration, having no mass support. In fact, the 'left front' government has sanctioned to police administration an amount which is nearly Rs. 8 crores more than the amount the Congress had spent even during the 'Emergency' last year. Hence, from the allocations the 'left front' government has made on the head of police accounts, it is really difficult to find, I must say, any conformity between their professions and deeds.

Secondly, I have also not been able to make out any difference between the previous Congress Government and the present 'left front' government on the question of attitude towards police administration. The Congress, in the past, sought to justify all instances of police atrocities on the plea of maintaining 'law and order'. And in the name of law and order they even tried to draw public support, to some extent, in favour of such atrocities. People of this state are aware from their experiences of the days of the UF governments that whenever there was a spurt of powerful and organised mass movements, the capitalists, industrialists and the vested interest were invariably the first to raise

a hue and cry over the question of law and order. In this connection, I must mention another important point. That is, we must try to understand, how, in a class divided, capitalist society like ours, this concept of 'law and order', over which such a hue and cry is so often raised, has actually developed. We know that the character of labour and production in our society, is social. In other words, workers here produce for the entire society, but the ownership of this social wealth is individual. That is to say, the right to usurp and establish individual ownership over social wealth built up by crores of working people with the sweat of their brow, is regarded as a 'sacred right' in our country. And it is in order to mobilize the exploiters moral support of the people in favour of this so-called right and defend it at all costs that the concept of 'law and order' has been developed. Thus the entire structure of law and order basically stands on social injustice. Here the hue and cry is raised over law and order, the moment just a finger is laid on the so-called special prerogatives of the vested interest, and

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Comrade Sarkar's Speech On General Administration

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inconceivable in any democratic system in the world. So this being the tradition of Indian bureaucracy, we can have no reason to trust it. We must remember that its constant endeavour is to anyhow bribe and satisfy whichever government comes to power and thus exert its influence on the government to fulfil its own purposes. Hence the government must not on any pragmatic consideration, let the bureaucracy give up a relative administrative neutrality. Only then can the bureaucracy be made to realise that it is time they behaved differently, for such high-handedness would no longer be allowed.

But I am constrained to state that it is already on record that the present 'left front' government too has, on a number of occasions, failed to reflect desired neutrality in its administration. I already have reports that the present government too has been showing scant regard for opinions of mass organisations and representative bodies of the people. For instance, the finance minister has said in his budget speech that he has decided to set up a pay commission in consultation with government employees. But

several government employees' organisations have complained that they had never been consulted with in this matter. To take another instance, the Class Four government employee's union had sent a memorandum to the honourable chief minister in July last, drawing his attention to some of their long standing problems and demands. But far from inviting them to meet him, not even an acknowledgement of receipt of the memorandum has been made on behalf of the chief minister. There are several other instances. The West Bengal Registration Employee's Union, for instance, had sent a deputation to the law minister, Mr. Halim, to talk over some of their demands and problems. But the law minister flatly refused to meet them on the astonishing ground that the union was not affiliated to the co-ordination committee. Hence, if this be the attitude of ministers themselves, then all talks about keeping the administration clear and maintaining administrative neutrality, would only amount to hollow promises. So I would like to draw the attention of the government to these serious questions, demand of it to be more careful and cautious regarding these matters.

RESOLUTION ON MISA

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will further help hoarders, monopolists and back-marketeters to do as they like. Will they please tell us how many hoarders and monopolists they have so far arrested under this act? Rather, was it not in order to ensure that there are no organised mass movements against the very system which encourages hoarders and back-marketeters to exploit that the MISA and other black acts were freely used against toiling people connected with democratic

mass movements? How can they disown that on the plea of 'Emergency' they had actually reduced the entire country to a vast prison-house in a fascist manner with the help of these very acts so much so, that even the other capitalist-imperialist countries wondered where to hide their shame? Anyway, I will not go deeper into the matter since time allotted to me is short. So while reiterating my fullest support in favour of the main resolution I would like to move

an amendment. I feel that instead of remaining content simply with an appeal to the central government to scrap MISA it is necessary, in order to make our stand more resolute and better express the anxiety of the house over the continuance of this black act, to add to the resolution the following declaration: "This house further feels that as long as MISA remains in force, the state government will not take recourse to it".

The amendment was rejected by 85-11 votes.

SAME OLD ATTITUDE TO POLICE AND BUREAUCRACY PREVAILS

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attempt to justify police actions against mass movements on the plea of law and order does also come.

Under this circumstance, a government which is even slightly pro-people, is certainly expected to see that the police do not get any opportunity to suppress mass movements on the plea of maintaining law and order, keeping in mind the real meaning or significance, the capitalists and the vested interest attach to this question. Side by side, it is also expected that such a government would, under its direct initiative, prevent police interference in mass movements and encourage them to strengthen and develop continuously as legitimate democratic mass movements conducive to the struggle for complete emancipation of the masses. It was with this very purpose that the principle suggested by the SUCI that the police shall not interfere in legitimate, democratic mass movements, was accepted by the first United Front government in 1967, which received extensive mass support. But it is sad to note that the present 'Left Front' government has neither accepted nor declared as yet that historic policy adopted by the first United Front government on the question of attitude of the police towards mass movements. As a result, we can find no tangible difference between the previous Congress Government and the present 'Left Front' government on this vital question.

Thirdly, how would a left government installed in power through elections in a capitalist system, determine its attitude towards the police? Surely it must be determined from a class angularity. If we judge the whole thing from this perspective, then what is the real class character or significance of the police in our society? We would see that it is a permanent organ of the state machinery. Now what is this

state machinery? From the teachings of Lenin we know that state machinery is the most powerful instrument of coercion and oppression in the hands of the ruling class for the continuance of class rule and oppression. Further analysing this state machinery he has shown that it is made of three permanent organs—the military, the judiciary and the bureaucracy including the police. These permanent organs of the state have therefore developed as a definite system, with a definite class outlook and class character. And yet, the 'left front' government has been often making observations like—'all policemen are not bad; 'there are some good ones among them too', or 'the bureaucrats are not all bad either, for there are many good bureaucrats as well'. What does this all mean? Does it make any difference even if there really are a few good individuals among them? Certainly not: for that does not imply an overall change of the system in the least. Here, the real purpose of such ovations is obviously to undermine the main problem itself, which too, is another social democratic method of hiding the coercive character of the bourgeois state from the masses.

Lastly, I would like to raise the question of behaviour of the police with the masses. You will perhaps all admit that the particular type of police behaviour in our country, with the masses and organisers and workers of democratic movements, has no parallel anywhere in the civilised world. The attitude and practices of the colonial system are still equally prevalent among the police in our country even today. The very police which is the defender of law, tramples upon law itself and harasses numberless people with false cases. You all know what atrocities they indulge in, inside the police stations. They

first arrest the person of their choice and bring him to the police station. Then they decide which case and which sections should be applied against him. And the sections are so applied that the person arrested cannot even move a bail petition. In other words, when a person is arrested, he is not given a case on the basis of the crime he has actually committed. Instead, it has become a matter of pure discretion. This thing has been going on for a long time. So under this circumstance, what is the use of simply talking of democracy? How can there be democracy in a country where the administration and its important counterpart, the police, do not care to follow even a minimum democratic code of conduct? Whereas see, in an imperialist country like Britain, where also the police is the defender of the coercive state machinery, such instance of police behaviour with the masses is unthinkable. Even America, which heads the imperialist world and which we call 'butcher', does not allow its police to behave in such a deplorable manner with the masses. But in our country it is a part of everyday life. So if this is to be changed, then the police must be forced to change their behaviour with the masses. For this, they must be made to follow a definite code of conduct. But this cannot be done by simply appealing to their good senses. Measures must be taken in such a manner so that whenever there is any complaint against the police made by any section of the masses, there is immediate arrangement for probing into the complaint with all seriousness. Further, all officers found guilty, must be given exemplary punishment. The police must be made to understand that they are nobody to control the masses. Rather, it is the masses who are to control them. But we have

Call for Left and Democratic Front

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the left and democratic parties and forces operating in the state on the basis of common agreed programme, definite principle and a well-defined code of conduct. While giving shape to this historic necessity, the Committee was sorry to note how the repeated calls of our party for the formation of this front fell on the deaf ears of CPI(M) along with RSP and RCPI. Instead of responding to this genuine call for unity they are busy to anyhow fulfil their pragmatic purpose. The CPI(M)-RSP-RCPI-combine has developed a so-called Left Front of their own, leaving aside our party SUCI and other democratic forces of the State. But the sectarian character of the so-called combination has been amply clear to the people inasmuch as the

announcement of formation of the so-called Left Front has not come to them as a genuine alternative to the ruling party as also a real instrument of struggle on a concrete programme and principle with clear cut code of conduct notwithstanding vague slogans and vocabularies.

Finally, the State Committee, in the greater interest of the people, further extended its appeal to CPI(M) and other left and democratic parties to refrain from pursuing their sectarian petty politics and to come forward in all earnestness to help developing a really broad-based Left and Democratic United Front as an alternative instrument of struggle in the hands of the people, based on concrete programme, principle and code of conduct which is the need of the hour.

On Withdrawal of Text Book

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takes the wind out of the sail of religion in so far as its influence on the social activities in the individual and on the state is concerned. As a result of the more Hindu revivalist tendencies of the present ruling bourgeoisie of our country, the Indian people even today are a conglomeration of socially and culturally different communities distracted by language, religion, caste and race".

Sri Nanaji Deshmukh's note to the Prime Minister is a glaring testimony to what Comrade Shibdas Ghosh pointed out in 1964. It is seen that the parties like the CPI and the CPI(M) are also very vocal in condemning the note of Sri Deshmukh.

not yet found any positive stand to be taken by the 'left front' government in this matter. Hence, be it from the point of approach or from the point of allocations of expenditure on the head of police accounts the policy of the present government is just a repetition of the same old policy of the Congress. This cannot, on any account, be called pro-people.

But can these revivalist ideas be wiped out from society by mere protests? Facts speak that the parties like the CPI and the CPI(M) do not lag behind in capitalising and encouraging the communal passion for their petty sectarian party interest. Instances can be multiplied to show that these parties set up candidates in election on communal consideration. Mr. Nambodripad, the then Chief Minister of Kerala constituted Muslim dominated Malappuram district solely on communal consideration. Such instances can further be cited. These opportunistic acts are standing in the way of eradicating communal influences over the society. Those who seriously feel concerned in democratising the Indian society must incorporate in their programme the task of social and cultural revolution. Without accomplishing these vital tasks mere verbal protest will cut no ice.

On Labour Budget

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singly vague. It has only directed to reinstate the only those employees who have been absent in their place of employment since 1971 but the government order is silent on the cases of employees victimised for other reasons where is then the difference of this policy from that of the previous Congress Government?

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